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PLAUTUS, CAPTIVI 984

In this line we learn that the young Captive, who goes by the name of Tyndarus, had as a child been called Paegnium. Editors do not fail to call attention to the fact that this is a *redender name*, merely a translation of the Greek *παίγνιον*, "plaything," comparable to our "Pet" (Lindsay, *Captivi ad loc.*), "Goldie," or "Buster" in origin. This explanation may be correct and fully satisfactory, but I should like to offer another. *Παίγνιον* suggests rather strikingly the proverbial *ἄνθρωπος θεοῦ τι παίγνιον ἐστίν* (Laws 803C and elsewhere). If Plautus, or the author of the original Greek play, must have a tell-tale name for a boy stolen from his home at the age of four, captured in war twenty years later, and as a result of that capture a slave in his own father's house, he could hardly choose a better one than <Θεῶν> *παίγνιον*. This interpretation is borne out by a line of the Prologue (22). The speaker is informing the audience that Tyndarus is a slave now in his father's house, though neither he nor his father knows it, and then in true New Comedy fashion he moralizes on the sad lot of man: "Di nos quasi pilas homines habent."

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AN ANCIENT SPORTING TERM

Students of the Classics who permit themselves so far to stray from grace as to become casual or confirmed readers of the sporting section of the daily newspapers, may conceivably be familiar with the somewhat curious term "punch-drunk." It is vividly and picturesquely descriptive of the physical condition of the pugilist who, under the shock of severe blows, has sustained a slight concussion of the brain and reels about with glazed eyes and a general deportment suggestive of an advanced stage of intoxication.

The sporting editor who glibly writes of the "punch-drunk" boxer is doubtless altogether innocent of any knowledge of Theocritus. Nevertheless, when he employs the expression he is but Anglicizing a phrase of that poet's. In his Hymn to the Dioscuri, Theocritus paints for us a brilliant—albeit a gory—picture of the pugilistic combat between Amycus and Polydeuces during a pause in the journey of the latter to Colchis. At the beginning of the contest, the son of Zeus, like the "ring-general" of modern times, craftily manoeuvres so as to have the sun on his back, and meets the rushing attacks of his antagonist with a veritable shower of blows which flesh and blood cannot long endure. Ere long Amycus is in dire distress.

ἔστη δὲ πλῆγαις μεθύων, ἐκ δ' ἔπτυσεν αἷμα
φοῖνον.

"He stood 'punch-drunk' and spat out crimson blood." (xxii. 98.)

Of course the unearthing of modern sporting and even slang expressions in the ancient texts is nothing new. The student of Aristophanes is wont to point out the (seeming) prototype of the now obsolescent "Go chase yourself!" in *The Clouds*, 1296.

οὐκ ἀποδιώξει σαυτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκίας;

ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

A. D. FRASER